

Affordable Housing

Goal #1 of the 2005 – 2008 Consolidated Plan is to “provide decent affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households.” Affordable housing is a key ingredient for building stronger families and more vibrant neighborhoods. By investing in affordable rental housing, homeownership opportunities, home improvements, weatherization and energy efficiency, and service-enriched housing for those who have been homeless, as well as by creating incentives for private developers to contribute to affordable workforce housing, the City of Seattle through the Office of Housing (OH), helps people find the housing they need and helps build community in neighborhoods around the city.

Housing Needs: Actions Taken to Foster and Maintain Affordable Housing

In 2005, the OH made measurable progress toward meeting priority housing needs and addressing neighborhood and community housing issues. Outcomes for all OH housing programs include providing decent housing and a suitable living environment for low- and moderate-income people and/or revitalizing Seattle’s lower income neighborhoods.

The Office of Housing funds housing development that addresses a range of low-income housing needs, including serving the homeless. These investments support the vitality of neighborhood business districts, often including retail and community facilities within housing projects. To ensure all Seattle residents have access to a safe and affordable home and a suitable living environment, the OH invests in and advocates for:

- affordable rental housing ;
- homeownership opportunities ;
- home improvement ;
- energy conservation measures ;
- service-enriched housing to help the homeless ; and
- incentives for private developers to create affordable housing

These priorities address the needs identified in the Consolidated Plan.

The following are the highlights of activities undertaken by the City during 2005. Additional progress in addressing affordable housing needs was made through a number of different programs not specifically mentioned here (i.e. Sound Families Initiative, Taking Health Care Home, Green Building, Multifamily Tax Exemption Program, Surplus Property Disposition, community revitalization initiatives, etc.). The accomplishments listed below represent the result of the expenditure from a number of fund sources, including CDBG and HOME. The CAPER tracks the expenditure and results of HUD grants but it is beyond the scope of this report to track all fund source expenditures.

1. During 2005, the Seattle Office of Housing awarded \$17 million to 11 projects, supporting the development or preservation of 494 rental housing units. This housing is being developed by non-profit housing organizations, and will include space for chronically homeless elderly

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individuals, people with disabilities or special needs, homeless individuals and families with multiple special needs, low-income artists, and families with low-wage jobs.

2. In 2005, the Office of Housing funded 207 service-enriched housing units. Of these, 191 apartments will serve homeless adults and 16 will provide supportive housing for homeless families.

3. The people who live in service-enriched housing have such low incomes that they can afford very little in rent. As a result, rent payments are not high enough to cover either support services for residents or the ongoing costs to maintain and operate the building. In 2005, 121 homeless or special needs units received Section 8 assistance awarded by the Office of Housing for Seattle Housing Authority. (An additional seven vouchers were awarded for housing that is not dedicated for homeless and special needs residents.) Another 31 units received vouchers directly from HUD.

4. The high cost of single-family homes and condominiums in Seattle creates a daunting challenge for first-time homebuyers and threatens the economic vitality and diversity of the city. To provide working families the opportunity and stability that homeownership brings, the Office of Housing has developed homeownership programs in partnership with local lenders and non-profit organizations. In 2005, funding was committed to help a minimum of 78 first-time homebuyers purchase a home in Seattle. Also during 2005, 67 City down payment loans closed, averaging \$31,123 per homebuyer. Of these buyers, 45% earned between 60 and 80% of median income, and 55% of buyers had incomes less than 60% of median.

5. The Office of Housing's HomeWise Program provides weatherization and energy conservation improvements that can reduce a household's energy consumption by as much as 40%. In 2005, the HomeWise Program provided energy conservation audits and financial assistance for eight multifamily buildings with 706 apartments, as well as for 13 single-family rental homes and another 201 owner-occupied single-family homes.

6. Low-income, including elderly, homeowners often lack sufficient resources to properly maintain their homes. In addition to weatherization services, the HomeWise Program provides low-income homeowners with low-interest loans to address health and safety repairs and deferred maintenance. In 2005, HomeWise provided loans for 47 low-income homeowners.

Specific Housing Objectives for Federal Funding reported in the Consolidated Plan (CDBG and HOME only)

The following describes the progress made in meeting the specific objective of providing affordable housing, including the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income renter and owner households, comparing actual accomplishments with proposed goals for federal funds in 2005. These outcome numbers may be lower than those described in the previous section because this section deals only with federal fund sources.

HomeWise (Weatherization/Rehabilitation)

Funding: \$361,279 CDBG and \$875,000 CDBG PI.

2005 Target: 1,200 housing units would be weatherized and 38 would be rehabilitated.

2005 Accomplished: 920 weatherized (644 0-30% Area Median Income-AMI), 230 31-50% AMI, 21 51-80% AMI) and 47 rehabilitated (18 0-30% AMI, 10 31-50% AMI, 19 51-80% AMI).

Weatherization goals are met by two alternative standards: units weatherized and kilowatt hours saved. In 2005, because of new, comprehensive assessment methods, kilowatt savings were achieved by performing more extensive weatherization improvements in fewer units. New assessment methods allow for a more comprehensive assessment of energy loss and more precise measurement of actual energy savings resulting from weatherization. These comprehensive assessments also typically identify more weatherization measures and result in higher per unit expenditures; however, total energy savings goals were achieved. The 2006 production goal will be adjusted to account for the more comprehensive assessment of weatherization needs and the resulting higher per unit cost. Of homes receiving HomeWise funded improvements, 46 that were weatherized were occupied by households with incomes below 125% of federal poverty guidelines.

Homebuyer Assistance

Funding: \$818,855 HOME, \$185,050 HOME ADDI (American Dream Down payment Initiative), \$50,000 HOME and \$50,000 CDBG estimated PI.

2005 Target: 27 households received down payment assistance.

2005 Accomplished: 40 households will receive down payment assistance (55% expected to be in the 0-60% AMI range and 45% in the 60-80% AMI range).

In 2005, actual PI totaled \$528,946 (\$365,946 HOME PI, and \$163,000 CDBG PI). That PI, in addition to the HOME allocations, totaled \$1,532,851. HOME allocation and PI funding were committed to programs providing assistance to a minimum of 40 first-time homebuyers. Loans are counted at the time of funding commitment rather than at loan closing, consistent with the practice for the rental production program.

Minor Home Repair

Funding: \$474,917 CDBG.

Estimated: 725 senior households would receive home repairs

Actual: 753 senior households received home repairs (509 were 0-30% AMI, 205 were 31-50% AMI and 39 were 51-80% AMI)

Multifamily Finance Division Staffing

Funding: \$621,909 CDBG

Estimated: N/A

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Division staff facilitated the award of \$17 million for 11 developments containing 494 affordable rental units (255 0-30% AMI, 203 31-50% AMI, 35 51-60% AMI and 1 61-80% AMI)

Multifamily Rental Housing Preservation & Production (HOME)

Funding: \$3,080,133 HOME and \$200,000 HOME PI.

2005 Target: 74 housing units would be preserved or produced

2005 Accomplished: 85 housing units preserved or produced (see Multifamily Finance Division Staffing for information on affordability)

In 2005, an additional \$460,276 in HOME funds was available from 2004 carryover. This provided for a program budget of \$3,540,409 in 2005, which enabled 85 units to be preserved or produced.

Multifamily Rental Housing Preservation & Production (CDBG)

Funding: \$701,369 CDBG and \$222,050 CDBG PI.

2005 Target: 21 housing units would be preserved or produced

2005 Accomplished: 19 housing units were preserved or produced (see Multifamily Finance Division Staffing for information on affordability)

In 2005, \$120,000 in PI was awarded to rental housing projects; the remaining PI will be allocated in Spring 2006.

Homebuyer Education & Counseling

Funding: \$216,989 CDBG

2005 Target: 20 homebuyers would successfully purchase homes

2005 Accomplished: 34 households successfully purchased homes (all with incomes below 80% AMI); 563 households received homebuyer education and counseling.

These services (homebuyer education, counseling and assistance) were provided via a services contract with the community-based non-profit agency HomeSight.

Additional Housing Accomplishments – Non-Consolidated Plan Funds

Other, non-Consolidated Plan funded program and project outcomes in 2005 that directly improved the lives of low-income individuals and families and strengthened Seattle neighborhoods include:

- Providing funding for 7 new rental projects creating a total of 343 units – surpassing the 2005 goal of creating 301 units.
- Energy Conservation improvements provided to 226 single family homes and 706 multifamily units, saving utility costs and energy for low income families and improving home health.
- Committing \$500,000 to create an innovative homebuyer program for the developmentally disabled, in partnership with Parkview Services.

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- Investing \$1.8 million to launch a Homebuyer program to help new Seattle Public School teachers buy their first homes.
- Securing permanent housing for 86% of participants through the Sound Families homeless families program.
- Growing City-funded affordable rental housing available in Seattle to more than 9,500 units, representing a leveraged investment of over a billion dollars.
- Utilizing the Housing Bonus/Transferable Development Rights program generating \$2.9 million to create housing for low wage workers in Seattle.
- Developing 13 SeaGreen projects and completing six more, continuing the City's leadership in sustainable building practices for affordable housing.

Efforts to Address “Worst-case” Housing Needs and Housing Needs of Persons with Disabilities

Worst-case housing needs and housing needs of persons with disabilities are addressed by the development of service-enriched housing, as described in point #2 under “Housing Needs” written above. A total of 207 such units were produced in 2005.

Relocation

The Office of Housing discourages affordable rental housing and homebuyer proposals that will result in permanent displacement of households. Projects must be designed to minimize displacement of households. Any temporary relocation or permanent displacement of households must comply with all applicable provisions of (a) the City's Household Relocation Assistance Ordinance (TRAO), (b) the City's Just Cause Eviction Ordinance; and (c) for projects using federal funds, the City's Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan (RARAP), the federal Uniform Relocation Act (URA), and other relocation regulations and handbooks applicable to the particular funding program.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with the Office of Housing as early as possible for information regarding relocation when they are considering acquisition and rehabilitation of occupied buildings. Office of Housing staff review proposals for potential relocation activities including assessment of the income and rent of existing residents and the proposed relocation plan and budget. If federal funds are allocated to a project that involves relocation activities, the Office of Housing monitors compliance with all requirements.

In 2005, Seattle Housing Authority temporarily relocated 4 of the residents of Alder Crest, a 36 unit multifamily rental project that is undergoing a substantial renovation. The remaining residents were permanently relocated and received Section 8 vouchers for use in their new units or 42 months of rent differential. Prior to securing funding, only 14 of the units were occupied. The tenants received notices of their eligibility for URA benefits.

Leveraging Resources

The Office of Housing's funding commitments for rental housing production and preservation in 2005 leveraged \$4 for every dollar in City funds (including CDBG and HOME). The leveraged funds came from such sources as the State Housing Trust Fund, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's Sound Families Initiative, Federal Home Loan Bank, low-income housing tax credit equity, bank debt, tax-exempt bond financing, fundraising and other owner contributions. One unique source of leveraged funds in 2005 was a \$2,820,460 contribution for affordable housing by the developer of the new Sheraton Hotel addition, which began construction in 2005. This funding purchased transferable development rights from two low-income housing projects, helping to preserve that housing resource, and contributed to the City's Housing Bonus Fund, making funding available for new construction of affordable housing.

The Homebuyer Assistance Program achieves a similar leverage of other resources for first-time homebuyers: every \$1 of City funding leveraged \$4 in other public and private financing. This includes publicly funded mortgage financing and down payment assistance through the State Housing Finance Commission, the State Housing Trust Fund, and the Federal Home Loan Bank; private contributions to Habitat for Humanity projects and United Way's Individual Development Account program; and private lender mortgages.

CDBG funds for staffing of the Office of Housing's HomeWise Program, which provides weatherization and energy conservation improvements and rehabilitation of homes occupied by low-income households, are leveraged with a number of sources. PI (repayment of previous loans) provides capital for HomeWise rehabilitation loans. The original loans were made using either CDBG or Seattle Housing Levy funds following the relevant program's guidelines and the same general restrictions apply to the use of program income. . In 2005, HomeWise weatherization and energy conservation work is funded by the State of Washington, which is a conduit for a number of fund streams. The amount funded for completed projects in 2005 was: U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program \$388,861, U.S. Dept. of Energy Low Income Weatherization Assistance Program \$451,982, Bonneville Power Administration \$1,265, and State of Washington Energy Matchmakers Program \$766,314. Seattle City Light provides another \$647,621 for the HomeWise program. Note: total State weatherization funds provided in 2005 = \$1,608,422.

Barriers to Affordable Housing

All programs seek to increase affordable housing opportunities for low-income households. This is done in part by providing gap financing to create affordable rental housing, providing down payment assistance, and decreasing energy costs for low-income households through weatherization and energy conservation improvements. In addition, the City's public policies are generally favorable to affordable housing development, maintenance and improvement. City zoning provides for capacity to add a range of housing types in amounts exceeding planning goals.

City of Seattle fair housing outreach efforts

The Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) conducts extensive ongoing outreach efforts to address impediments to fair housing choice. In addition to the efforts outlined below, SOCR offers a wide variety of materials in both paper and web format (www.seattle.gov/civilrights). The following information currently is available:

- General civil rights information for people who live or work in Seattle, or who visit the City, including detailed instructions about charge filing and handling;
- Extensive selection of brochures, booklets and cards, including *How to File a Discrimination Complaint*, *Disability Etiquette Handbook*, *Fair Loans Fair Housing – Your Guide to Avoiding Predatory Loans*, and *Fair Housing for Real Estate Industry Professionals – Top 100 Frequently Asked Questions & Answers*;
- Publications translated into the following languages: Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Korean, Russian, Amharic, Tigrinya, Oromo, and Somali; and
- Published articles and current information on discrimination and civil rights issues.

From October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2005, SOCR conducted training and presentations to both housing providers and consumers, as well as to business, community and immigrant groups. During this time period SOCR and King County Office of Civil Rights coordinated the “Fair Housing and Real Estate” Project on behalf of the Fair Housing Partners of Washington State. With funding from HUD, the project developed a 60-page question-and-answer manual about fair housing for real estate professionals. As part of the project, SOCR and King County OCR conducted several three-hour training sessions, using a training curriculum based on the manual. SOCR also conducted outreach via paid print advertisements and published articles. Several independent press articles resulted from behind-the-scenes input from our office.

Training to Housing Providers

From October 30, 2004 to September 30, 2005, SOCR presented training on fair housing issues to 619 housing providers (property managers, landlords and staff representatives – also includes real estate professionals from the Fair Housing and Real Estate special project):

- **Quarterly Training for Apartment Managers/Owners** (10/27/04, 1/26/05 4/27/05 and 7/27/05; attendance 60 per session, total 240) – co-sponsored and jointly presented by SOCR, HUD, King County Office of Civil Rights Enforcement, Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services and Washington State Human Rights Commission
- **Mortgage Lending Training Seminar** (11/30/04, attendance 40)
- **Affordable Housing Association** (2/24/05, attendance 14)
- **Community Association Institute** (3/12/05, attendance 40)
- **Mortgage Lending Training Seminar** (3/31/05, attendance 40)
- **Affordable Housing Association** (5/26/05, attendance 25)

Special Project: Fair Housing and Real Estate (FHRE)

- **Windermere Real Estate Co.** (10/25/04, attendance 40)

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- **FHRE Focus Group** (10/27/04, attendance 8)
- **FHRE Focus Group** (10/28/04, attendance 4)
- **Independent Brokers Association – FHRE Focus Group** (11/19/04, attendance 15)
- **Seattle-King County Association of Realtors** (1/25/05, attendance 25)
- **Re/Max Metro Realty** (2/3/05, attendance 20)
- **Women's Council of Realtors** (4/1/05, attendance 50)
- **Training: Tacoma Fair Housing Conference** (4/21/05, attendance 25)
- **Training: FHRE** (5/26/05, attendance 8)
- **Training: FHRE** (6/15/05, attendance 20)
- **Training: FHRE** (6/30/05, attendance 5)

Training to Community Groups

From October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2005, SOCR presented training on fair housing issues to the following community groups. In total, approximately 118 people received training.

- **Seattle STRIVE** (10/25/04, attendance 30)
- **West Seattle Work First** (11/8/04, attendance 30)
- **Seattle Central Community College** (11/15/04, attendance 14)
- **West Seattle Work First** (1/25/05, attendance 30)
- **Fair Housing and Domestic Violence** (7/14/05, attendance 14)

Outreach to Communities that Speak English as a Second Language

From October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2005, SOCR reached approximately 2,572 people who speak English as a Second Language through the following events and efforts:

- **A Toda Mujer Spanish-language radio show** (1/30/05, audience 500)
- **Bilingual Center – Seattle Public Schools** (2/17/05, attendance 100)
- **People-to-People Cable Access (Amharic-language TV program)** (3/26/05, audience 1,000)
- **Help Your Clients Navigate Financial Waters** (6/9/05, attendance 200)
- **Latino Youth Conference** (2/13/04, attendance 250)
- **Refugee Community Building Conference** (9/16/05, attendance 300)

Outreach via Community Events

From October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2005, SOCR distributed literature about fair housing and staffed resource and information tables at the following events. Informational materials reached approximately 4,550 people.

- **Nonprofit Assistance Center** (10/20/04, attendance 150)
- **Dia de Muertos Festival** (10/30/05, attendance 2,000)

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- **ED-CON Realtors Trade Show** (10/7/04, attendance 700)
- **TRENDS Property Management Trade Show** (12/7/04, attendance 700)
- **Independent Brokers Association Conference** (3/1/05, attendance 300)
- **John L. Scott Trade Show** (3/10/05, attendance 700)

Media Outreach and Advertising to Promote Fair Housing

Print advertising – From October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2005 SOCR ran the following advertisements to promote fair housing:

Colors NW – 6 ads

International Examiner – 6 ads

The Medium – ads in Black History, SoulFest, and MBO special issues

On-Site (monthly newspaper for residential property managers and landlords) – ad every other month

Real Change – ad every other month – 6 total

The Rising Star (Muslim community) – 6 ads

Runta (Somali community) – 6 ads

Seattle Gay News – ad for Pride Edition (June 2005)

Filipino American Herald – ¼ page ad

The Skanner – ads in Black History, Careers and Minority Business special issues

Other Advertisements

Helping Link / Mot Dau Noi 10th Anniversary Celebration program (11/04)

MLK Festival Booklet (1/05)

Diversity News Black History Month edition (2/05)

Southeast Seattle Almanac and Residents Guide (2/05)

Center for Career Alternatives 25th Annual Dinner Booklet (2/05)

Greater Seattle Business Association (3/05)

Property Managers Resource Directory NW (3/05)

Seattle Jewish Film Festival Program (3/05)

Paul Robeson Awards Event booklet (4/05)

NW LELO Annual Dinner booklet (6/05)

International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies ((IAOHRA) Conference booklet (8/05)

NW Immigrant Rights 20th Anniversary Gala booklet (9/05)

Published Articles

“*Seattle amends law to strengthen fair housing protection,*” Fair Housing Update (1/05) – quarterly publication produced jointly by the Fair Housing Agencies of WA, and mailed free to residential property managers and landlords throughout Seattle-King County

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“City of Seattle amends law to strengthen fair housing protection,” On-Site (2/05) – newspaper for residential property managers

“There is justice in this world,” KOMO TV Channel 4 (4/14/05)

“Terminal cancer patient won’t be evicted,” Seattle P-I (4/15/05)

“Cancer patient wins battle over eviction,” Seattle Times (4/15/05)

“Jennifer Howlett won’t be evicted,” Capitol Hill Times (4/20/05)

“Fair housing ruling allows dying woman to keep housing” On-Site (6/05)

“Fair housing ruling allows dying woman to keep housing” Fair Housing Update (7/05)

Educational Materials Produced

“Fair Housing for Real Estate Industry Professionals: Top 100 Frequently Asked Questions and Answers” – a publication of Fair Housing Partners of WA State – produced by Seattle Office for Civil Rights and King Co. Office of Civil Rights

Fair Housing outreach efforts for 2006

In 2006, the Seattle Office for Civil Rights will develop and implement an outreach plan for communities most likely to experience impediments to fair housing. The office is currently reviewing its case statistics to identify groups that will be the focus of targeted outreach.

Actions Taken to Evaluate and Reduce Lead-based Paint Hazards

The City recognizes the need to decrease the level of lead-based paint hazards in residential units improved with City or federal funds. Contractors/workers doing rehabilitation or weatherization through the Office of Housing's HomeWise Program are required to utilize lead safe work practices. HomeWise provides payment for the initial lead safe training utilizing CDBG funds set aside specifically for that purpose. The City's four primary contractors for weatherization work have pollution occurrence insurance. Two of the Office of Housing's property rehab specialists are certified risk assessors. At homes occupied by children and/or pregnant women, rehab specialists use lead wipes to determine the need for special precautions. All clients are provided information regarding lead poisoning prevention.